

citizens of America feel if we, the military, did not defend our Nation one day because we went on strike?—but we won't go on strike. We will live in tents, eat MREs, and hope our families can survive without pay, food and shelter."

The House has voted to support the military. The Senate needs to pass this bill. The President needs to sign up to support our troops.

Are you in, Mr. President?

And that's just the way it is.

RECOGNIZING THE TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

(Mr. FLORES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLORES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Texas A&M University Women's Basketball team on their remarkable run in the 2011 NCAA tournament and their victory over Notre Dame to claim their first ever national championship in school history.

I have the privilege to represent both Baylor University and Texas A&M. I don't think there are many Members here in this House who have the opportunity to represent two schools that advanced to the Elite Eight of the NCAA Women's tournament. However, I do, and one of them went all the way and won the national championship. Also, as a member of the Texas Aggie Class of 1976, I am especially thrilled that the final score was 76-70.

Coaches Gary Blair and Vic Schaefer and their staff should be commended for their leadership in guiding the Texas Aggies to their sixth straight NCAA tournament and to their first ever national title. Let me add that Danielle Adams, the Aggies' all-American senior, scored 30 points, the second highest total in championship game history.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to stand before my colleagues and say that there is no other coach, no other team nor any other fan base that deserves this more than Coach Blair, the Texas Aggie Women's Basketball team, and the loyal fans at Texas A&M University.

Gig'em Aggies and great job.

LACK OF LEADERSHIP

(Mr. FLEMING asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. FLEMING. Mr. Speaker, with respect to a possible shutdown, I have to say that this is a direct result of a distinct lack of leadership.

Former Speaker PELOSI showed no leadership in not even attempting to submit a 2011 budget in the 111th Congress. Senator REID has been totally unwilling to submit an alternative 2011 budget, and the President, until this week, has totally checked out of the process.

This country desperately needs leadership. Speaker BOEHNER has been providing that leadership as he has been fully engaged and has submitted a number of excellent 2011 budget proposals, but he can't do it by himself.

Mr. President and Senator REID, it is not too late to step up and provide the kind of leadership this country wants and desperately needs. Do the right thing now. Agree to this legislation that will help get this country back on sound fiscal footing.

STAND WITH US WHO ARE STANDING FOR THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

(Mr. TIPTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TIPTON. Mr. Speaker, today this House took the unprecedented step of doing the right thing. We stood up for our men and women in our Armed Forces. However, Senator REID and the President had already announced before the vote was even taken that it was going to be "dead on arrival." Senator REID said that it's a fantasy.

Senator REID, let me give you a reality. The reality is that our men and women in our armed services, who are risking their lives for us, deserve better than the politics of usual.

Senator REID, we call on you, and we call on the President of the United States to stand with us who are standing for the American people: our men and women in the Armed Forces, our parents, grandparents, and our future generations as well. We have to not only protect our present but build for our future and have actual fiscal responsibility in this country. You can no longer be allowed to be the party of "no": no ideas, no solutions, simply saying "no" because of your bankrupt ideas.

Now is the time for action. The American people are counting on us.

THE BUDGET CRISIS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HULTGREN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from California (Mr. GARAMENDI) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. GARAMENDI. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

I want to turn our attention to the issues that are before us today and see if we can have a better understanding of what has taken place.

We just heard a little bit about honoring our troops. Let's be very clear about this. The Democratic Caucus in this House, the President, and the Senate will always and have always honored our troops. We are in the midst of a very serious budget crisis for this year with very, very serious issues at stake, and the Republicans chose to attach to the funding bill numerous cuts that devastate important programs that affect the well-being of every

man, woman, and child in this Nation and, indeed, around the world. Because of those cuts, as well as certain language that was added to the bill, we chose not to vote for the funding.

The President has said, Stop the games. Stop playing around. Give us a straight up and down on funding the government without all of these add-ons and games that are being played by our Republican colleagues.

The President has asked for a clean bill. We should give him a clean bill and carry on to fund the government and provide for our troops and our military families, and we will do that.

Now let's understand what is at stake. Not only in the current year's budget, which is the next 7 months, but in the year beginning on October 12, the Republicans have put together a proposal that would devastate seniors and those who are unable to care for and to provide themselves with medical services—in other words, those dependent upon the Medicaid program.

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Very straightforward. The proposal that was put out by the Republican caucus 2 days ago would terminate and stop Medicare as we know it today. Medicare is a program in which every working American pays into it, and when they became 65, they expect to receive the Medicare health care benefits that are guaranteed or at least have been guaranteed for the last 40-some years. That's a uniform benefit package across this Nation. It is a very successful program. It's one that Americans literally live long enough to get into. And yet the Republican caucus is proposing to terminate it, to end the Medicare program. And instead, turn over the \$400 billion a year that goes into the Medicare services, turn it over to the private health insurance companies—the biggest gift ever given to the private health insurance companies.

I know those companies. I was the insurance commissioner in California for 8 years. And I spent most every day of those 8 years chasing after the health insurance companies, forcing them to pay claims and stopping them from discriminating against people who had preexisting conditions and developing programs and policies that were underfunded, underpaid, and underperformed.

That cannot happen to our seniors, but that's what the Republicans want to do. And we need to stop it. And we will because the seniors of this Nation already sense what is at hand. They already know that the Republican budget proposed would devastate one of the two pillars of the social safety net that every senior in this Nation at one time or another depends upon.

The second pillar—we've already seen the path that this is going to go on—in 2004, the Republican caucus, together with the Republican President, George W. Bush, proposed to privatize Social Security. Fortunately, the revolt that started in the Democratic caucus of